

Weaving Art

WILLIAM AIRD

Wm. Aird, born March 3, 1821. Married Elizabeth McClean. Died July 4, 1889, in Heber, Utah.

Early in life, he was converted to the gospel, became an Elder in the Church, and did missionary work in his homeland.

In May of the same year, he and his wife emigrated to America, landing in New Orleans. From there they traveled by boat up the Mississippi River to Iowa, where they joined a handcart company of Saints and spent the next five months on the plains, arriving in Salt Lake City in October.

While residing in Salt Lake, three children were born to this pioneer couple—twins, Elizabeth and William (William, who died at the age of 7), and Janet.

They then were called to move to Spanish Fork, helping to establish that community. From there, they moved to Heber, where they spent the remainder of their lives. Another son, John, and a daughter, Grace, were born in Heber.

William was a weaver by trade and also followed farming and stock raising. He owned the first spinning wheel and loom in Wasatch County. His wife helped him spin and weave cloth to make clothes for their children as well as the people of the community.

The children likewise distinguished themselves by being active in Church and community affairs. Elizabeth married Gustaf Ludwig Anderson, a merchant and farmer of Heber. Henry taught school in Heber and then in Provo for many years. John W. became a prominent surgeon and physician, practicing in Heber and Provo. He was known throughout the state and nation for his outstanding contributions in the field of medical research. He married Emily McCauslin.

William Aird passed away July 4, 1889, at the age of 68. His life exemplifies that of the early pioneers in contributing greatly to the establishment and development of the West.

Children: Henry M., Dr. John W., Elizabeth, Janet and Grace.

nearly everyone to have a few sheep to furnish wool for spinning and weaving into a cloth called "jean."

Production of the cloth was laborious. After the wool was sheared from the sheep it had to be washed and scoured, carded by hand into spools and then spun into yarn. If coloring was desired, tag alder, rabbit brush and indigo were used.

William Aird was the first community weaver, and received the yarn from the people for weaving. The wool had to be mixed with cotton yarn for warp to make the "jean" cloth. Practically everyone wore clothing made from this type of cloth.

Additional Church organization occurred in 1861 when John Young, a brother of President Brigham Young, came to Heber and organized the first High Priests Quorum. Elisha Averett was sustained as president of the quorum. He moved away in less than a year and John M. Murdock was appointed. Counselors were Thomas Todd and John Jordan with William Aird as clerk.

Up until this time in the valley's history there were two counties that claimed the Wasatch land. Utah County included the southern area of the valley and the northern part was in Salt Lake County. The dividing line ran through the valley about one mile south of Heber. The present cities of Heber and Midway were in Salt Lake County.

Early in 1862 the U. S. government created the Territory of Nevada out of the western part of the Territory of Utah. This made it necessary to revise some of the county lines in the remaining Utah area and the Territorial Legislature created 17 new counties in the state, one of them being Wasatch County.

The new county was bounded on the west by the summit of the Wasatch Range, on the north by Summit County, on the east by the territorial line between Utah and Colorado and on the south by Sanpete County.

A later legislative act described the county boundaries as follows:

"All of that portion of the territory bounded on the south by Utah and Sanpete Counties, west by Utah and Great Salt Lake Counties, north by the summit of the range of mountains south of the headwaters of the East canyon and Silver Creek, following said summit to the point where the road leading to Great Salt Lake City and Rhode's Valley crosses, thence south to the Provo River at the high bluff below Goddards' ranch; thence along the channel of said river to its head waters, thence easterly to the summit of the range of mountains north of Uintah Valley, thence along the last named summit and south to Brown's hole to the 32nd meridian west from Washington City and east by said meridian, is hereby made and named Wasatch County with county seat at Heber City."

It is believed that the Goddard's ranch mentioned is the present O'Driscoll ranch situated on the north side of the Provo River at the lower end of Kamas Valley.